

# AUDUBON MAGAZINE

*The Season*

*Formerly BIRD-LORE*



SECTION II

MAY-JUNE, 1942

*Published by the*  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY



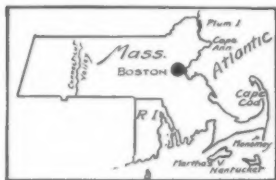
## The Season

CXLII. February 1 to  
April 1, 1942



### BOSTON REGION

February averaged a little colder than usual, but with no spells of very low temperatures. Precipitation was again way below normal. Mild weather the latter part of the month eliminated most, if not all, of the scanty snow



cover in southern and coastal New England. March, usually New England's worst and most disagreeable month, was almost unbelievably mild and pleasant. The first nine days averaged  $11^{\circ}$  above normal per day, and the month closed with an average of  $5^{\circ}+$  per day! There was not a single cold wave or snowfall worthy of this variable month. We finally got plenty of rain, twice the normal amount, and wells, reservoirs, ponds and marshes filled up, relieving the water famine.

The balance of the winter was on the whole most uneventful. There was a slight increase in the white-winged gulls, but no Alcids appeared, and most of the more unusual winter visitors petered out. An exception was a second invasion of Redpolls in northern New England, these birds becoming abundant after February 20. Dr. Gross writes that on March 13-16 at Brunswick, over 75% of 150 Redpolls banded were Greater Redpolls, only the second time that this subspecies has even been 'common' anywhere in New England. Two

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observers from western Massachusetts also feel sure they saw a few Greaters. No Redpolls of this flight reached eastern Massachusetts, where spring was already far advanced. The only other news was the mortality from oil off Monomoy of over 5000 Eiders and other seafowl, chiefly Scoters. Two Northern Eiders were picked up dead (Griscom). The few wintering Snowy Owls lingered to April 5.

Notable rarities: Ivory Gull, 1 adult at Newburyport, February 7 (Miss Snow, *et al.*); Hawk Owl, Bath, N. H., March 4 (Smith); American Three-toed Woodpecker, 2 at Westport, Mass. (Bowen and Rhode Island Ornithological Club); Oregon Junco, 1 at Brookline, March 13-16 (Mr. and Mrs. Roger Ernst), and 1 at Northampton during March (Coombs, Eliot).

Turning now to the spring migration, the very mild weather produced one of the earliest on record, though not quite equaling 1939. Canada Geese reached Maine on February 27, Prairie Horned Larks appeared at various breeding grounds on February 22 and 24, and Alan Morgan witnessed a migration of Buteos at Wayland starting on February 24. The first spring birds began appearing near Boston on March 5, and a marked wave occurred on March 8. There was further migration on March 12-14, March 17-18, and 21, and 26-28, these approximate dates proving the absence of the usual return to winter two or three times during the month.

The flight of Canada Geese was quite fair. The ducks of every possible species were way down in numbers, the poorest flight in many years. Outstanding was the

absence of the Hooded Merganser and the further sharp decrease in the breeding population of Wood Ducks, for which no explanation is at hand. The early migration of Buteos continued through the first half of the month; far more Red-tails and Red-shoulders than usual, and a remarkable number of Rough-legs near Boston, several observers having the unique experience of seeing 3 birds in the field at one time. With them came more Goshawks and Northern Shrikes than reported all fall and winter. The Turkey Vulture reached Berkshire County on the unprecedented dates of March 9 and 11. Rusty Blackbirds were rather scarce and Fox Sparrows numerous.

The adult European Black-headed Gull departed from its usual program and spent the entire winter at Newburyport Harbor. It was joined on March 22 by an immature of the first year (Griscom, *et al.*). A very remarkable and unprecedented observation was an adult Sabine's Gull at Gloucester, March 8 (Dr. Richard Allyn). A Raven was noted at Waterford, Conn., March 11, fortunately by E. V. Stoddard, who has really known the Raven for years. It may well have been one of the birds reported December 28 in the New York region. No less than 3 Egrets reached Massachusetts from March 4-14, part of the visitation to the Northeast after the storm of March 3 in the Middle States. Spring Egrets are still a great rarity up here in New England, but the normal dates are May 10-15.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Mass.*

## NEW YORK REGION

Although there was no unusually cold weather during February, daily temperatures were rather consistently below average, with a total of 991 degree-days against a normal of 944. Precipitation was only about two-thirds



normal, the snowfall only one-tenth of that usual for February. Prevailing winds were northwest and considerably above normal. Low temperatures kept inland fresh-water ponds and reservoirs icebound throughout the month. During March, however, there were only 5 days when the average temperature fell below normal and the total of degree-days was but 680, against a normal of 846. The total precipitation was almost double the monthly norm, but snowfall throughout the region was negligible; these conditions seemed to hurry the migrating flocks of water birds through the New York region.

When ice had left the fresh-water lakes, a rather unusual number of Red-throated Loons was reported inland. European Cormorants were reported from Montauk, 7 on February 22 (McKeever, Bull, Young) and 9 at the same place on March 8 (Breslau, Sedwitz). One of these birds wintered at Larchmont on Long Island Sound, with a maximum of 7 there on March 7 (Oboiko, Burdsall).

Several unusual heron records were reported during the period: 1 American Egret at Westhampton on March 8 (Breslau, Sedwitz); 2 photographed by Wilcox at Speonk on March 15; an adult Yellow-crowned Night Heron at Idlewild on February 22 (J. Mayer).

Six Whistling Swans at Brookhaven, February 22 (McKeever, *et al.*), 4 remaining at close of the period (Wilcox); 5 at Southaven on February 22 (Fischer, Robinson, Wright). A concentration of  $2500 \pm$  Brant at Jones Beach, March 31 (Fischer, Smith). Reports of the rarer ducks show that a pair of Gadwall was present at Pelham Bay throughout January and well into February, living in a brackish creek (McKeever, *et al.*). Canvasback, 85, Watermill, March 8 (Breslau, Sedwitz) and 160 at Flushing, February 22 (Fischer, *et al.*). Shoveller, 15 at Hempstead, February 22 (same observers). Pintail, 3000, at Hatfield Swamp and Troy Meadows, N. J., March 15 and 22; "the heaviest concentration here in years" (Brown). Practically all had left by March 29. Large concentration of Scaup and Scoters along both north and south shores of Long Island toward the end of

the period. Scaup, 8000± on Shinnecock Bay, March 31 (Fischer, Smithe). Harlequin Duck again wintered at Atlantic Beach.

An early flight of Turkey Vultures occurred in northern New Jersey, 7 at Wyanoke on March 25 (C. K. Nichols). The hawk flight along the Watchungs started early in March, the first migrants being noted on March 5. The first real flight took place on March 18 and 19, when 153 hawks were recorded, 83% were Buteos, and 2 Goshawks were included (A. Peterson).

Piping Plover were noted at Moriches, March 13 (Wilcox), and others at Oak Beach and Idlewild on March 20. Black-bellied Plover at Long Beach, March 22 (Breslau, Sedwitz). Ten Purple Sandpipers at Montauk, February 22 (McKeever, *et al.*).

Snowy Owls were reported only from Orient and Idlewild at the end of March. An early Barn Swallow at Idlewild, March 16 (Mayer). Carolina Wrens were seen by several observers: 1 at Easthampton, February 23; 1 at Orient and 2 from Shelter Island, March 4; from New Jersey 1 at Bound Brook, February 14, and 1 at Clifton, March 7.

Black-capped Chickadees, reported in unusually large numbers earlier in the season, are now present in normal numbers only in Westchester County, Long Island and northern New Jersey.

A singing Cardinal was noted at Scarsdale on March 17 (Hayden). There were many reports of both single birds and small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks earlier in the winter. During the current period, they seem to have been entirely absent from Long Island, but were present in New Jersey until the end of the period: 1 at Bound Brook, February 12 (Hunn, Hughes, Fish); 1 at Troy Meadows, February 12 (Fry); 3, Dunellen, February 15 (Hunn); 50, Sommerville, March 28 (Stearns, Greiner). A northerly movement of Ipswich Sparrows was indicated by a report of 12 at Jones Beach on March 20 (Elliott) and 3 at Orient on the same day (Latham).

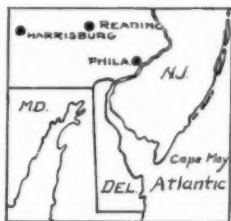
The last flock of Snow Buntings reported was one of about 250 birds at

Montauk on February 23 (McKeever, *et al.*).—CHARLES K. NICHOLS, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.*

## PHILADELPHIA REGION

Weather conditions for the period averaged about normal with very little snow.

It becomes more and more apparent that war conditions are restricting the activities of bird students. Many observation points along the Delaware River and the seacoast are shut off or restricted.



Observers have been questioned and detained. Cameras have been held until films were developed and inspected. It is a good plan, whenever possible, to notify the authorities in advance of your coming and avoid all complications.

Destruction of tankers by enemy submarines has caused many casualties among sea birds. Some of the birds found were Loons and Grebes. Ducks also have suffered. Some observers report no more than the usual number of oiled birds; others think such birds more numerous than usual. At Holgate, N. J., late March, a heavy tarry oil covered acres of flats and birds were scarce. The usual briny ocean air reeked of the odor of oil.

Banders have reported no less than 8 pairs of breeding Horned Owls in southern New Jersey during February and March. Two nests containing 3 eggs each: 1 at Jacksonville, N. J., February 7 (Miller); 1 at Quinton, N. J., February 8 (Reimann). Beneath one nest, which contained 2 young, the wing-feathers and mandibles of a Crow were found.

Long-eared Owls were reported as follows: Ambler, Pa., March 8, 7 (Cadbury); Princeton, N. J., February 27, 1 (Rogers); Camden County, N. J., March 8, 1 (Haines). A Short-eared Owl was seen at Fortescue, N. J., March 22 (Ward). A Snowy Owl was reported at Wildwood, N. J., February 15 (Reimann), apparently the latest 1942 record for this region.

There was one record of a Saw-whet Owl—February 27, Princeton, N. J. (Rogers).

At Brigantine, N. J., on February 23, 2 Prairie Horned Larks were singing over the golf course (McIlvain, *et al.*).

Evening Grosbeaks continued to frequent feeding stations at widely separated points throughout the period; largest flock was at Haddonfield, N. J., mid-March, 50 (Whiteway). Some other records: 10 at Lititz, Pa., February 23 and for ten days after that date (B. L. Sharp); Middletown, Del., March 2, 3 (Miss Ethel Brady).

An immature Kittiwake, a very rare bird on the Delaware River, was seen at Tinicum, Pa., February 18 (Culver). The bird was observed several times during the winter, but could not be identified satisfactorily until the above date. When all the gulls were grounded by a heavy wind, it was possible to make a detailed observation, "even the color of the bill graduating from a light flesh color to a dark tip."

The winter population of Brant at Absecon and Lake bays was estimated as equal to that of last year—30,000 birds.

About 15,000 Snow Geese, some reported to have wintered, were present at Fortescue, N. J., in mid-March.

The following records were contributed by E. Y. and Q. Kramer: Wildwood, N. J., February 1, Purple Sandpiper, 25; Island Beach, N. J., February 15, Snow Bunting, 50 and Ipswich Sparrow, 8. Found dead were: Gannet, 1; Kittiwake, 3; Razor-billed Auk, 1; Brünnich's Murre, 1; Dovekie, 6.—JULIAN K. POTTER, 437 Park Ave., Collingswood, N. J.

## CAROLINA REGION

Weather somewhat colder than normal in February and about normal in March. Rainfall in South Carolina normal in February and

considerably above in March, though below normal at Raleigh for both months.



*Inland district.* In the mountains unusually large flock of Killdeer (45) at Rosman, Transylvania County, February 5 (Mrs. Grinnell). At Arden (Grinnell), Pine Siskins on February 4, and more Purple Finches this year than usual. First Brown Thrasher at Arden on March 11, and at Tryon (Holmes) on usual date of March 23; a white 'Junco' noted at Tryon during the period (possibly a Snow Bunting). Chipping Sparrow at Arden, March 20; Fox Sparrows noted for first time in winter at Tryon. Arden had Black and White Warbler, March 23; an unusually early Catbird, March 29; Brown-headed Nuthatch again noted there on February 2.

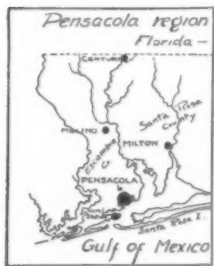
*Farther east.* Siskins were noted at Davidson (Brown), February 16 to March 16, being first record for locality. Purple Martins recorded for the region: Summer-ville, S. C. (Swope), March 6; Columbia (Mrs. Charles), March 14; Washington, N. C. (Biggs), March 12; Fayetteville, March 16; and next day at Morganton (Gregory); dates are about usual. Summerville also notes a number of species abundant for a day or so as though passing through: a wave of Myrtle Warblers on February 16; Black and White Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets on March 18-20; Purple Finches were fewer than usual; and first Summer Tanager, March 17. Mrs. Charles, at Columbia, noted more Swamp Sparrows and fewer White-throats; Bluebirds started nesting on March 14, and first Black and White Warbler on March 25. Records that are about usual date are: Yellow-throated Warbler at Washington, March 17; Parula at Fayetteville, March 16; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, March 28, at Raleigh; Tree and Rough-winged Swallows, March 30. Chipping Sparrow at Raleigh on March 18 and Osprey on March 30, each about two weeks late.

*Coastal district.* Pea Island (Walker) on March 11 had only a few oiled birds along 100 miles of coast; these included a few Bonaparte's and 1 Laughing Gull. Shore birds have been scarce there, with only a few Sanderling wintering and an occasional Greater Yellow-legs, until 3000 Red-backed Sandpipers arrived on March

26. Rough-legged Hawk, February 5, constitutes the second record for the refuge. The only arrivals at Pea Island that were on time: Blue-winged Teal, Piping Plover, and Barn Swallow, March 25. Chamberlain, at Charleston, reports that certain small birds seem scarcer than usual—White-throated Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, Myrtle and Orange-crowned Warblers. Except for a large flock of several hundred birds near the city in mid-March, Robins were more scarce. Harold Peters reports hearing 3 Woodcock singing, at one time, before dawn on February 16. A few Martins appeared over Parris Island (60 miles southwest of Charleston) on February 27, but were not noted at Charleston until March 4—about ten days late. Late by about the same length of time were Willets on March 27 and Swifts on March 31. Several species that were due had not been reported at the end of the period. Departing about on time were 10 Canada Geese seen over the city on March 30. —C. S. BRIMLEY, 518 Washington St., and JOHN H. GREY, 2718 Vanderbilt Ave., Raleigh, N. C.

## PENSACOLA (FLA.) REGION

Continuously cold weather and heavy rainfall prevailed throughout the period. High water levels reported in the preceding



period were raised even higher, and a 6-inch rain on February 14 inundated all low-lying areas. Spring, as typified by plant growth, was late, but bird migration seems to have been little affected and several species arrived earlier than ever before recorded.

The abundance of water in roadside ponds favored the presence of upland shore birds. The arrival of the Pectoral Sandpiper on March 1 was the earliest ever recorded. Lesser Yellow-legs on March 1 and Solitary Sandpaper on March 8 were earlier than usual, and all three

species were common at the close of the period. The Upland Plover, however, a regular though uncommon migrant through this region, has not been reported.

The first bird 'wave' of the season came through late in March. Yellow-throated Vireo (P.A.D.Hollom) and Prothonotary Warbler and Orchard Oriole (both reported by A. Sheppard) appeared on March 28. On March 29, Sheppard reported Philadelphia and Bell's Vireos, two of the rarest species on the Florida list; Broad-winged Hawk, Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers, and Redstart were earlier than ever before recorded; and other new arrivals were Green Heron, Kingbird, Crested Flycatcher, Wood Pewee, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and Summer Tanager. Further arrival dates of interest include: Purple Martin (very early), February 5 (Mrs. A. L. Whigham); Osprey, February 22; Little Blue Heron, March 1; American Egret, March 2; Louisiana Heron, March 8; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, March 16; Rough-winged Swallow, March 18 (Hollom); Parula and Hooded Warblers, March 21 (Hollom); Snowy Egret, March 22; Chimney Swift, March 24 (C. Kahn); and White Ibis, March 25 (Mrs. Whigham).

The arrival of White Ibis and Kingbird at Panama City (100 miles east of Pensacola) on March 27 (Hollom) compares interestingly with local dates, but the Barn Swallows reported at the same time were earlier by more than a week than any ever recorded at Pensacola.

Red-breasted Nuthatches, reported in the preceding period, stayed later than on their previous visit in 1923-24, and the last bird was seen on March 15. Other departure dates include: Horned Grebe, Ring-neck, Buffle-head, and Brown Creeper, March 15; and Phoebe and Song Sparrow (rare), March 29.

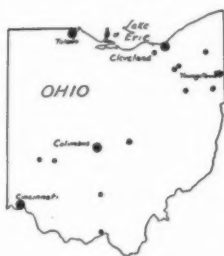
Unusual occurrences include: Canvasback (2), February 22; Gannet (1), March 8; and Baldpate (3), March 15. A wintering Black and White Warbler was seen on February 1. Mrs. Whigham's flock of 150 Purple Finches, reported in the preceding period, maintained its numbers well into March and a few birds were still present at the close of the period.



Military occupation of, and consequent bird observer exclusion from, many of the beaches and waterfront areas that have been the source of most of my shore-bird and waterfowl information in the past affects this report and will make itself felt in future reports 'for the duration.'—FRANCIS M. WESTON, 2006 E. Jordan St., Pensacola, Fla.

## OHIO REGION

The weather during February was rather consistently cold, although no extremely low temperatures were recorded. Precipitation was some-



what above normal at most stations in northern and central Ohio, and slightly deficient in the southern part of the State. March was warm, with mean temperatures of from 2°-

4° above normal. Due chiefly to heavy snowstorms on March 3 and March 30-31, precipitation was rather above normal in northern Ohio.

In central Ohio on February 8, the Wheaton Club reworked the area at Buckeye Lake which had been covered on the Christmas bird count. The results (reported by E. S. Thomas) revealed many changes in the bird population. The total number of species reported on February 8 was 61, as opposed to 76 in December. Twenty species, mostly water birds, had disappeared, and 5 additions were made to the first list, namely Bald Eagle, Green-winged Teal, Killdeer, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Mockingbird. It seems probable that the last 2 of these were present in December but overlooked. The number of individuals was higher in February than in December: approximately 8900 as opposed to 7700. A large Crow roost which had been established in the area during the winter accounted for much of the increase. Other species which had gained in numbers were: American Merganser, from 250 in December to 1000 in February;

Golden-eye, from 50 to 250; Horned Lark, from 2 to 143 (largely of the northern race, *alpestris*). The numbers of Robins and Bluebirds were little changed from their December levels, but Bob-white had dropped from 174 to 130, Blue Jays from 101 to 66, and Carolina Wrens from 21 to 11. Since the Bob-white and Wren are sedentary birds, the evidence points to a considerable mortality.

Judging from the reports at hand there was very little migration during February. In southwestern Ohio some movement involving Killdeer, Robin, and Bronzed Grackle was evident at Oxford (Mattox); there was an increase in Robins and Meadowlarks in central Ohio by February 23 (Clausus, Barry); and a small flight of Herring Gulls was noted on February 28 north of Dayton (Blincoe). There seem to have been no changes of any consequence in bird populations in the northern part of the State, excepting possibly among waterfowl. In the Toledo area, the numbers of Black Ducks and Mallards declined after February 21 (Campbell). It was not until the first decisive change to warmer weather, March 6-8, that the early migrants appeared in numbers. During this period dates of arrival at widely separated stations showed unusually close agreement. For example, the first migrant Robins were noted on March 6 at Salem (Baker), on March 7 at Sebring (Eckelberry), Cuyahoga Falls (G. A. Smith), Cleveland (Morse), Put-in-Bay, on March 8 at Toledo (Campbell). Other species that also were rather generally distributed over the State by March 8 include Killdeer, Bluebird, Meadowlark, and Redwing. A small hawk flight noted at Toledo on March 7 included 23 Red-shouldered Hawks, 13 Red-tails, 5 Marsh Hawks and 3 Cooper's Hawks (J. and M. Stophlet, Campbell). Only slightly later than these earliest migrants was the Woodcock, which reached Newark by March 10 (Clausus), Put-in-Bay on March 12, Columbus on March 14 (Barry) and Salem on March 16 (Baker).

Waterfowl were present in fairly satisfactory numbers, with the peak of the flight occurring shortly after the middle of March. At Guilford Lake on March 15,

before the ice was entirely gone, there were 12 species of ducks, Canada Goose, and Whistling Swan (Mellinger, Stewart). At Indian Lake on the same date, 14 species of ducks were seen (B. H. Smith). Pintails were perhaps more common than usual; the largest number reported was 2500 in the Toledo area on March 21 (Campbell). The greatest number of Swans at Toledo, 400 on March 22, was far below that of other years. At Pymatuning Lake on March 29 there was a noteworthy concentration of Canada Geese, "at least 1000" (G. A. Smith).

Along Lake Erie there were numerous records of Black-backed Gulls. The largest groups, so far as the available data show, were 3 at Cleveland, February 24 (Williams); 6 at Toledo, March 15 (Mayfield, Stophlet); 7 at Put-in-Bay, March 16. Two Glaucous Gulls were seen at Toledo on March 21 (Campbell), and 1 remained at Put-in-Bay from March 12-16. A few additional Snowy Owl records deserve mention: near Toledo on February 14 (Campbell); at Guilford Lake on March 15 (Eckelberry); and near Cleveland on March 26 (Williams, Morse). Also of interest was a Long-eared Owl seen at Oxford through February and March (Mattox).—CHARLES F. WALKER, *Stone Laboratory, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.*

## CHICAGO REGION

February had only three clear days, with average temperatures near zero except for four days from February 17-20. March was



a little better, with ten clear days and slightly above normal temperatures throughout. Both months were very dry.

Great Blue Herons returned earlier than usual this year; the heronry west of Lake Forest was occupied by 6 or more birds on March 19 (Mrs. Glen Lloyd). Ducks put in their normal appearance toward mid-March,

and 6 Ruddy Ducks were noted at Orland on March 25 (Mrs. Baldwin, Mrs. McElroy). Erffmeyer saw Hooded Mergansers at McGinnis Slough on March 28, and Coots arrived throughout the region about ten days early. Bonaparte's Gulls were seen in Lincoln Park on March 25, almost a month early (Dreuth). Mr. Grow reports Mourning Doves in Gary on March 12, ten days early, and occasional Red-bellied Woodpeckers there.

Tree Swallows, due the third week in April, arrived in numbers on March 25 at Orland (Baldwin). A very early flock of 98 Red-wings was seen in the Miller Dunes on February 22 by Grow, who reports 3000 near Gary in company with a few Rusties and Grackles on March 12. Arrival of sparrows was normal, with Field and Swamp Sparrows in Lincoln Park on March 20 and 21, 12 and 23 days early (Dreuth).

The migration to the end of the present period was normal in all respects, due no doubt to the prevailing normal weather conditions.—ELLEN THORNE SMITH, 370 Onwentsia Rd., Lake Forest, Ill.

## MISSOURI REGION

Weather conditions varied somewhat during February and March. Precipitation and temperatures averaged about normal



in the south and west, with almost no snow. Temperatures were slightly below normal to the north and east, with snowfall above normal.

Water levels remained quite high and vast areas in the riverbottoms were still flooded at the end of the period, due to excessive precipitation last fall. The excess of water no doubt resulted in a scattering of migrating waterfowl, so that great concentrations in favorable places, as during the drought years, were not so noticeable.

At the Swan Lake refuge near Sumner, north-central Missouri, Kenneth Krum, manager, reports 3 species of geese and 15





*Photo by Eliot Porter*

**BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER** Migrating through the Carolinas in late March, it should have reached its nesting grounds just about on schedule.

species of ducks during migration. A flock of 250 Canada Geese appeared January 26, but the main wave of migration did not begin until March 8, along with the

Blue and Lesser Snow Geese. Maximum numbers—Canada, 400; Lesser Snow, 500; Blue, 2000—were present the latter half of March. The main flight of ducks came in

during early March, although Mallards, Pintails and American Mergansers were present during February. Some maximum numbers were: Mallard, 20,000, March 8-20; Pintail, 50,000, March 10-20; American Merganser, 800, February 8-25. Ruddies and Canvas-backs were not reported, and 500 Green-winged Teal and 300 Redheads were the greatest number of those species observed. At the Squaw Creek refuge in Holt County, the main flight of geese came somewhat later—2000 Blues and Lesser Snows on March 17, and 15,000 on March 27 and 28. About 25,000 ducks, mostly Mallards and Pintail, were there on March 27. A flock of 22 White-fronted Geese was seen in Platte County, March 15 (Harford, Spotswood, Cunningham), and 18 at Squaw Creek, April 4 (Cunningham). Shovellers were more numerous than for several years. The Ring-necked Duck, reported by Harris in 1919 as being the least numerous of the Scaup in this region, has recently far outnumbered the Lesser Scaup. The Ruddy, fairly common near St. Louis this year (Comfort), has been almost entirely absent farther north and west. In general, the diving ducks were down in numbers this year.

Migrating Herring and Ring-billed Gulls were more common than last year, particularly in the northwest.

The migration of Eastern Red-tails, which began in February, was about normal, but Western Red-tails, Krider's and Harlan's Hawks and American Rough-legs were reported in much smaller numbers than usual. About 50 Marsh Hawks and 5 Red-shouldered Hawks were seen between Kansas City and Squaw Creek on March 21.

Small land birds were not observed in such numbers as they were during the severe winter of 1940. In western Missouri, Harris's Sparrow shows a slight increase over 1941, but the Fox Sparrow wave was less noticeable than last year. During the second and third weeks of March, weed patches swarmed with Juncos. Four Lincoln's Sparrows, rare winter residents, were observed near Parkville on February 15.

The Arctic Towhee, known to winter

in the Missouri valley, was seen on an upland location on March 15 (Shirling), where it has been noted in October and March during the past two years—an indication of a migratory movement through the extreme western part of the State. About 1000 Lapland Longspurs, quite rare this winter, were observed in St. Charles County, February 15. Purple Finches were more numerous than last year, but no Pine Siskin reports.

Some species that decreased greatly following the very severe winter of 1940 seem to be making a comeback. The Bluebird and Phoebe have increased substantially over the State and St. Louis observers report an increase in Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe. The Carolina Wren, which disappeared almost completely from the northwestern part of the region following the very severe winters of 1936 and 1940, shows a slight increase this year.

On February 7, a flock of Red-wings, estimated to contain 100,000 birds, was seen near East Leavenworth, Platte County (Coles, Cunningham).

Among the rarities for the period: Oldsquaw, near Alton Dam, February 21 (Short, *et al.*); a flock of Bohemian Waxwings, St. Charles County, March 22 (Comfort). An adult Golden Eagle was observed just south of Kansas City on February 8, where it remained for about a week (several observers). A Black-bellied Plover, still in winter plumage but easily identified by the white on the rump and wings, was observed at the edge of a roadside pool in Platte County on March 15. — JAMES W. CUNNINGHAM, 4425 Main St., Kansas City, Mo.

## MINNESOTA REGION

A winter that averaged unusually mild passed into a similar spring. The U. S. Weather Bureau reported that the past winter was the third mildest and second driest here in the last 50 years. Average temperature was 19°. There was a brief spell of well-below-zero weather the third week of February and below-freezing nights throughout March with several falls of wet snow which reached a depth of a foot or more along the western part of the



navigation at Duluth opened on the 26th (the earliest on record) and Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River was open for traffic on the 28th.

The eastern part of the State is badly in need of rain but the heavy snows in the Red River valley and southward flooded the fields and streams. Ice in the interior lakes of northern Minnesota was still solid and traffic was continuing on Lake of the Woods to the end of March. Mrs. Olin of Duluth writes that there has been shifting ice in Lake Superior all winter, so that open water was visible except for a few days around February 22. From Roseau in the northwestern corner of the State, Mr. Fryklund writes: "We have enjoyed the most wonderful weather during the past winter months; very little snow and it has been ideal weather for any kind of work in the woods." Rather a long prelude but the winter has been a very unusual one and has had its effect on wildlife.

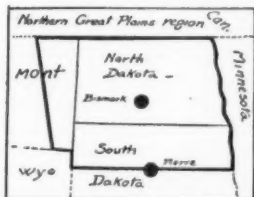
Robins were in evidence about the city of Minneapolis for a week previous to March 25. But the first arrivals are always uncertain, as a few birds pass the winter. At Duluth the first were noted on March 24 (Mrs. Olin) and at Dawson in the western part of the State on March 19 (Mrs. Peterson). The first Bluebirds were reported at Minneapolis on February 28, an exceptionally early date. Other arrivals for the Minneapolis area were: Killdeer, March 4; Flicker, March 30; Fox Sparrow, March 28; a pair of Wood Ducks looking for a nesting site on March 29 (Breckenridge). Mrs. Peterson reported from Madison: Migrant Shrike, March 24; Fox Sparrow, March 28; Hermit Thrush, March 30.

From Duluth comes the following: first Crow, March 5 (Mrs. Olin); Horned Lark, March 8 (Dr. Lakela); February 27, a flock of over 100 Old-squaws among the ice floes in Lake Superior. This duck came earlier than usual last fall (October 27—Dr. Abbott) and has been present in numbers all winter. Whistling Swans passed north across the State in considerable numbers, notably at Lake Traverse, Heron Lake and Long Meadow Sloughs near Minneapolis where a hundred or more arrived about March 26 and remained until early April. This has become an annual occurrence now, and is a new experience to old-timers. Canada Geese began going north about March 1.

*Interesting items.* Three Tufted Titmice at St. Paul, March 14 (Brother Hubert); Sharp-shinned Hawk at White Bear Lake, February 7 (Berthel); Black-crowned Night Heron near St. Paul and Horned Larks in full song on February 7 (Rosenwinkel); Marsh Hawks all winter as far north as Fertile in Red River valley (Nelson) and at Delta in Manitoba, March 3 (Hochbaum); a flock of 15 Blue-winged Teal with Mallards all winter near Morris (Warden Bolsted); a large number of Robins wintering at La Crosse, Wis., feeding on hackberry trees (Hickey).—THOS. S. ROBERTS, *Minnesota Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.*

## NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

With the exception of one snowstorm, the weather during the months of February and March has been exceptionally mild. On only eight mornings was the temperature below zero, and on only two days did it fail to rise above zero



during the entire day. On the 24th of March it started to snow, and continued for five days. It was indeed a real storm,

borne on a strong northwest wind, but as usual was quite uneven in distribution. While we received twenty-three inches of snow at Lower Souris, only two inches fell in Fargo. The snow at Lower Souris contained 2.51 inches of precipitation—a real gift to the prairie waterfowl. Many early arrivals went back south with the storm, but there was no loss of life. The only noticeable effect was the loss of tails by a number of Pheasants.

The only grebe recorded during the period was a Pied-billed at Waubay, March 27 (Ambrosen). Great Blue Herons arrived March 29 at Sand Lake (Beed). Whistling Swans first noted on March 30 at Sand Lake (Beed), and March 31 at Waubay (Ambrosen). The spring flight of geese has been good, with many more Canadas on Lower Souris than ever before. Canadas first observed in South Dakota on March 10 at Waubay (Ambrosen), North Dakota on March 20 at Upper Souris (Dart), and in Montana on March 24 at Medicine Lake (Horn). The other four varieties of geese common to the prairies (Snows, Blues, White-fronts, and 'Hutchins's') were recorded only in South Dakota, except for a flock of the smaller Canadas at Arrowwood on March 18 (Rognlie). The first ducks arrived in South Dakota before the middle of March, and in North Dakota after the middle, principally on March 19. On Lower Souris a heavy flight of Pintails and Mallards occurred on March 23, but a few days later they were all gone, retreating southward ahead of the storm.

There has been less than the usual number of Golden Eagles, while the Rough-legged Hawks have been much more common than usual. It is odd that only four observers noted the Killdeer, with the first record March 19 at Waubay (Ambrosen). At three other widely scattered points, this harbinger of spring was first noted on March 23. A few Herring and Ring-billed Gulls arrived very early. The earliest Ring-billed record for South Dakota was March 12 at Waubay, and for North Dakota March 15 at Lower Souris. In Beed's report for Sand Lake, he states that Snowy Owls were unusually abundant, and that the last one was seen on

March 14. A sprinkling of Crows wintered in favorable localities.

Most observers in North Dakota saw their first Robin on March 23, while in South Dakota they arrived about a week earlier. The earliest Bluebird record was March 18 on the Waubay refuge, where Ambrosen noted an unusually large migration of these birds through that area. Bluebirds were also reported to be unusually common at Tower City (Preston). Bohemian Waxwings were recorded at practically every station in North Dakota. The only Kinglets reported were Golden-crowned, March 25 at Brookings (Van Epps), and March 30 at Fargo (Stevens). Quite a number of Northern Shrikes were observed on Lower Souris this winter, as compared to the usual one or two. The arrival date of the Meadowlark varied from March 15 at Brookings (Van Epps) to March 30 at Medicine Lake (Horn), with the average approximately March 22. Pine Grosbeaks wintered in relative abundance in the Mouse River valley and in the Turtle Mountains, with the latest record being March 12 at Bottineau (Street), and Lower Souris. Pine Siskins were reported to be very common in the Oak Park area of Minot during all of March (Stine). Tree Sparrows arrived much earlier than usual—March 12, Lower Souris—and have been very abundant over most of the region, although reported scarce at Tower City by Preston. Snow Buntings have been very scarce.—C. J. HENRY, *Lower Souris National Wildlife Refuge, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Upham, N. D.*

## TEXAS COASTAL REGION

I. *The weather.* The first week of February was unseasonably warm and sunny. Fruit trees began to bloom and other trees to bud. But the rest of February and the first 20 days of March were made up of a long and regular series of a few days' rain,



followed by a few days' cold weather, followed by a few days' warmth and sunshine—and then the same succession all over again. The cold weather hardly went below 40°, and the warm days were almost summery. The last 10-12 days of March were bright and warm.

II. *General conditions.* Early February conditions changed little from those previously reported. All of the large hawks (except Sennett's White-tailed and Caracara), most of the ducks, House Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, Starlings, and White-throated Sparrows continued to be less numerous than usual. No Red-breasted Merganser was noted during the entire period, and only 1 Canvas-back. Pintails, generally the most numerous of the winter ducks, were present in less than half their usual numbers, and Lesser Scaups made an even worse showing. Blue-winged Teal began arriving in the Galveston Bay region in early March and, though abundant, were off considerably from previous years. Green-winged Teal were abundant at Cove during February, but none in the lower Galveston Bay area. Florida Gallinules, Pied-billed Grebes, Hudsonian and Long-billed Curlews, and Savannah and Song Sparrows continued to be remarkably numerous. Other water and woods birds were about normal, or at any rate better off than they were last year. Sennett's White-tailed Hawk and the Caracara, seldom seen in the Galveston Bay region a few years ago, have definitely established themselves in the area, and were seen regularly. No really rare or unexpected birds were reported for the season.

III. *Migration data.* The periodic appearance of warm weather with southerly winds during most of February and March, and the absence of any truly cold weather, permitted migration to proceed earlier than usual, on the whole. Variations in numbers of individuals among wintering species indicated that migrations were under way from early February. But the first new species, the Purple Martin, did not arrive until its usual date, February 14. No other spring migrant appeared in the region until the first week of March.

Some of the arrival dates of birds (with previous earliest date in parentheses for comparison) were as follows: Mexican Cormorant, Cove, March 12 (March 22); Reddish Egret, Galveston, March 7 (March 13); Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Cove, March 27 (March 23); Green Heron, Houston, March 28 (March 26); Least Bittern, Galveston, March 7 (Cove, April 20); Wilson's Plover, Galveston, March 7 (March 13); Golden Plover, Cove, March 12 (March 13); Upland Plover, Cove, March 12 (March 4); Solitary Sandpiper, Galveston, March 28 (Cove, March 23); Dowitcher, Cove, February 19 (March 23); Black-necked Stilt, Cove, March 12 (March 22); Chimney Swift, Houston, March 17 (March 21); Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Houston region, March 22 (March 22); Olive-backed Thrush, Kemah, March 14 (Cove, April 20); Red-eyed Vireo, Galveston, March 28 (Cove, April 3); Worm-eating Warbler, Kemah, March 28 (Cove, March 25); Prothonotary Warbler, Kemah, March 28 (March 28); Blue-winged Warbler, Kemah, March 28 (April 13); Magnolia Warbler, Kemah, March 28 (Bolivar, April 10); Blackburnian Warbler, Kemah, March 28 (March 28). The most notable thing about these dates is that those for this season are nearly all early.

No species was actually known to have departed by the end of the period. But the following seemed to be gone: Flicker, Cove, March 27 and Houston, March 26; Starling, Cove, March 21; White-crowned Sparrow, Houston, March 15; Goldfinch, Houston region, March 2.

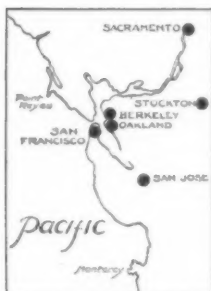
IV. *Nesting data.* Meitzen reports nests as follows: Red-shouldered Hawk, 3 nests with eggs at Hawkins (northeastern Texas) on March 12 and 13; 2 nests with eggs at Navasota (70 miles northwest of Houston) on March 19; 2 nests with eggs at Hempstead (50 miles northwest of Houston) on March 20. Barred Owl, 3 nests with eggs near Hawkins on February 12 and 13; 2 nests with eggs at Hempstead and another at Navasota on February 5. Mrs. Todd reports nests as follows: Wood Duck at Sheldon during March; Purple Martin carrying nesting material at Sheldon and Houston on March 27. Mockingbird fin-

ished nest in Houston by March 10, had all eggs laid by March 20, and young hatched on March 30.

In summary, a very early season.—  
GEORGE G. WILLIAMS, *The Rice Institute, Houston, Texas.*

## SAN FRANCISCO REGION

Impediments to the extensive recording of bird occurrences along the shore in central California have made it possible for



the watchers still active to give more attention to happenings on land and in the near vicinity of their homes. Aquatic birds, then, will have a minor place in the report for this season. Records are available for:

Black Brant, Pebble Beach, at north end of Carmel Bay, flock of 15, apparently wintering, observed on February 20, 24, and 25, and March 7 (Williams); Lesser Yellow-legs, Alvarado pools, 1 or 2 on February 22 and 28, and March 21 (Mrs. Allen); Sanderling, many on bay shore at Berkeley, February 17 (A.); Avocet, more than a hundred, all but 1 in breeding plumage, at Alvarado, March 21 (A.); Black-necked Stilt, 1 at Dumbarton Bridge, February 21 (Mrs. Sheldon).

Band-tailed Pigeons have been observed in many places where not normally present in spring. The following were reported: on February 8, a flock had been roosting for two weeks in pines at La Salle Street and Estates Drive, Piedmont. By February 14 the flock had increased to 60 or 70 (S. Parkinson). Near Chabot Observatory, in Leona Heights, Oakland, flock of about 12 on February 23; near Gilroy Hot Springs, Santa Clara County, flock on March 21; in Redwood Regional Park, Contra Costa County, flock on March 29 (Seibert).

Winter occurrences of numerous other species have been irregular as to time or

place. Some examples: Lewis's Woodpecker, on Mountain Boulevard, East Oakland, 3 on February 14 (Allen), Pacific Grove, March 1, Carmel, March 20 (Williams); California Woodpecker, Leona Heights, several on February 23 (Seibert); Winter Wren, Berkeley, heard frequently and still present April 1 (A.); Varied Thrush, Berkeley, more abundant than in any year since first identified (after berries were gone, they spent most of their time hunting for sprouting acorns among the wet leaves under oaks), reduced in numbers on March 23, 3 on March 28 (A.); Hermit Thrush, still in Berkeley, April 1 (A.); Townsend's Solitaire, upper Arroyo Mocho, February 22 (S.); Berkeley, March 9, 16, 26, 28 and April 1 (A.); Fox Sparrow, Oakland, 1 left yard on March 22 after staying since December 11 (S.), Berkeley, abundant at feeding tray until March 24 (A.).

Mention of transients has been even less frequent than usual. Rufous Hummingbird, Oakland, March 6 (Seibert), Strawberry Canyon, Berkeley, March 22 (Pitelka); Townsend's Warbler, Berkeley, began to increase March 24, abundant after that (Allen).

Except for the last entry in this list, arrivals of summer birds have been delayed, possibly by the colder than normal weather over most of the State. Mourning Dove, upper Panoramic Way, Berkeley, 1 on March 16 (Allen); Allen's Hummingbird, Oakland, February 6 (Seibert), Carmel, February 9 (Williams), Strawberry Canyon, Berkeley, 12 on March 22 (Pitelka); Western Flycatcher, Carmel, March 28 (W.), Berkeley, March 30 (A.); Violet-green Swallow, Tesla Canyon, large flock on March 15 (S.); Barn Swallow, Carmel, March 18 (W.); Cliff Swallow, near Alvarado and at Dumbarton Bridge, March 21 (A.), University Campus, Berkeley, March 21 (P.); Purple Martin, Hastings Reservation, March 30 (Linsdale); Warbling Vireo, Boulder Creek, March 22 (A.), Berkeley, March 26 (Miller); Orange-crowned Warbler, Berkeley, first song March 3, pair March 5, second pair March 27 (A.); Pileolated Warbler, Berkeley, first heard on March 24 (A.); Cowbird, Carmel, March 25 (W.); Black-



headed Grosbeak, Berkeley, 1 freshly killed found on street on February 19, and other reports, all very early, for that month (Mrs. Grinnell).

Observation of the Chestnut-backed Chickadee, near Gilroy Hot Springs and Pine Ridge, March 21 (Seibert), may signify a station on the margin of the range of the species rather than winter wandering.

Several species appeared to be late in starting to nest, but prospects at the end of the period appeared good for a successful nesting season. Red-tailed Hawk, pair with nest near Livermore, March 15 (Seibert); Golden Eagle, nests with 2 eggs each, near Livermore on February 22 and March 1 (S.); Sparrow Hawk, nesting in box in Oakland several days later than on preceding year, 2 eggs on March 17, 3 on March 20, and 5 on March 23 (S.); California Jay, pair taking twigs from an elderberry in Berkeley, March 15 (Allen); Raven, nest with 2 eggs near Tesla, March 15 (Seibert); Yellow-billed Magpie, nests ready for eggs, near Livermore, March 15 (S.); Bush-Tit, Oakland, pair gathering nesting material on February 7 (S.), Berkeley, nest nearly complete on March 19 (A.); Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Carmel, incubation of set of 7 eggs commenced March 21 (Williams); Brewer's Blackbird, Oakland, females gathering nesting material on March 26 (S.); Junco, Carmel, incubation begun with third egg of set on March 18, set completed with fourth egg on March 19 (W.).

With 12 traps set on 57 days between December 2 and March 21, E. L. Sumner banded birds on a quarter-acre area at the Reynolds residence in Piedmont. The 355 birds banded belonged to 12 species, as follows: Cooper's Hawk (1), California Quail (32), Wren-Tit (2), Varied Thrush (1), Hermit Thrush (2), Spotted Towhee (18), Brown Towhee (42), Junco (38), White-crowned Sparrow (46), Golden-crowned Sparrow (135), Fox Sparrow (8), and Song Sparrow (30). Of all the individuals, 257 were captured more than once, to make a total of 1440 captures. This work at a new station not only provides a measure of the winter concentration of birds at a single spot in the Oak-

land hills, but it gives basis for the gathering of many significant facts if the trapping is repeated in subsequent years. —JEAN M. LINSDALE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, Calif.*

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION

Extreme lack of rain featured the period. Only 2.31 inches fell, bringing the season's total rainfall to less than one-third that of last year. Nights in mid-February were mostly below freezing, with a low of 31° at Los Angeles and 23° in nearby foothills on February 15. The four rainy days brought additional snow to the mountains, causing a temporary increase of birds in the lowlands.

Observation of water birds is cut down tremendously by war conditions along the shore. Some interesting reports: Black Brant wintering at Point Mugu numbered only 500, compared with 1000 last year (Stultz); Wood Ibis, 20 at Lake Elsinore on March 8 (Hanna); the rare Blue-winged Teal, 3 at Santa Barbara, February 13 (W. G. Abbott); Hooded Merganser, 1 female at Pasadena, February 17 to at least March 7 (Cogswell, Murdock). At San Diego, Black-crowned Night Herons established a colony on the zoo grounds, and were carrying nest material on March 23 (Gander). Pied-billed Grebes at Echo Park, Los Angeles, had young on the water as early as March 3 (Daugherty).

Among land birds, nesting activity was in full swing during March—House Finches and Brewer's Blackbirds starting early in the month, with Towhees, Mockingbirds and Doves building later. Barn Owls had well-grown young on March 9 at San Diego (G.); Golden Eagle building and Horned Owl incubating on March 21 near Colton (H.). House Wrens had nests at Lakeside on March 19 (G.), Cactus Wrens on March 18 at Colton (H.),



Cañon Wrens late in March at Santa Barbara (Rett), and Hutton's Vireo on March 21 at Los Angeles (Kent).

Arrival of spring migrants in many cases was tardy. Some 'first seen' dates are: Poor-will, March 20 at Los Angeles (K.); Rufous Hummingbird, March 16 at Santa Barbara, Pasadena and Los Angeles; Western Kingbird, March 21 at Lakeside (G.); Western Flycatcher, March 20 at Santa Barbara (latest arrival in 6 years—Rett); Cliff Swallow, March 14 at Lake Hodges (G.) and Pasadena (Quattlebaum); Lutescent and Pileolated Warblers common in late March throughout; Hooded Oriole, March 20 at Glendale (D.); Bullock's Oriole, March 22 at San Gabriel River Sanctuary (Q., C.); Black-headed Grosbeak, March 26 at Pasadena (C.). Mr. Kent reported advance stragglers of species usually arriving in April: Black-throated Gray Warbler, March 9; Western Tanager, March 16; Wood Pewee and Warbling Vireo, March 23. Greatest rarity was a Summer Tanager (evidently a first-year male) at Santa Anita Rancho on March 14 (Quattlebaum), positively identified by *chick-i-tuck* call notes with which the observer is familiar in the Southeast.

In early February, ranks of wintering land birds were noticeably swelled with many Robins, Waxwings and Audubon's Warblers, but the majority disappeared again by late March as the food supply dwindled. An estimated 2000 Horned Larks were seen near Laguna Dominguez (Nigger Slough) on February 8; several of the rather uncommon Vesper Sparrows near Chino Creek on February 15. In the foothills, Golden-crowned and Fox Sparrows were more numerous than usual.

*Colorado Desert region.* This area has been thoroughly covered since March 7 by the Audubon Wildlife Tours led by Mr. Harwell. A list of 140 species was reported on the trips up to April 5.

*A summary of all of the foregoing reports appears in this issue of AUDUBON MAGAZINE under the title of 'The Changing Seasons' by Ludlow Griscom.*

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Outstanding among water birds near Salton Sea were the Cranes (both Little Brown and Sandhill, in proportion of 100 to 1), with flocks up to 200 seen flying north in March and a few still in Imperial Valley on April 5 and 6. Thousands of Eared Grebes were on Salton Sea; 13 species of ducks included Canvas-back, Red-head, Buffle-head, Mallard, Pintail, Baldpate, Cinnamon and Green-winged Teal, and Shoveller. Only the Ruddy Ducks were in numbers, the great multitudes of wintering Baldpates and Pintails having left the last of February (Reedy). Fulvous Tree-ducks present since about March 1 at State Refuge. Greatest rarity—2 male Golden-eyes on Salton Sea, March 15.

Cormorants, Egrets (2 species) and hundreds of White-faced Glossy Ibises had not started nesting at the end of March, but colonies of White Pelicans and (Treganza's) Great Blue Herons were seen, the latter having abandoned last year's rookery after a Horned Owl took quarters therein.

In the Coachella Valley and Twenty-nine Palms areas, characteristic desert residents were seen: Cactus Woodpecker, Say's Phoebe, Vermilion Flycatcher, Verdin (nesting), Cactus Wren (nesting), Leconte's Thrasher (1 nest), Crissal Thrasher, Sage Thrasher (rare migrant—several in song at Twenty-nine Palms), Plumbeous Gnatcatcher, Phainopepla (nesting), Scott's Oriole (few), Abert's Towhee, Desert and Brewer's Sparrows. All 6 species of Swallows found in California were seen migrating. In the marshes south of Salton Sea were at least 4000 Yellow-headed Blackbirds and an equal number of Red-wings. One Harris's Hawk, 2 Ground Doves and several Gila Woodpeckers seen in Imperial Valley, birds really characteristic of the Colorado River valley to the east.—HOWARD L. COGSWELL, 3807 Sierra Grande St., Pasadena, Calif.